

Newspaper	NEW STRAITS TIMES
Date	25 JUNE 2017

2017 AIDILFITRI MESSAGE

PM ON '5 CHALLENGES'

NST- 28/6/2017 pg. 2

Geopolitics, peace and security, economy, among issues

KUALA LUMPUR

DATUK Seri Najib Razak last night outlined five new risks and challenges, that Malaysia has to face.

The prime minister identified them as the issue of geopolitics; peace and security; the economy; placing the people's interests first; and, the future and National Transformation 2050 (TN50).

In his 2017 Aidilfitri message on the theme "IMalaysia bonds of association the foundation of a successful nation" broadcast over television, Najib said on the issue of geopolitics, Malaysia faced a serious challenge of a new world of geopolitical risks, among them the crisis involving the Islamic countries of the Gulf, North Korea's nuclear programme and the implications of Brexit.

"Of course, all of these developments have to be examined carefully," he said.

On peace and security, the prime minister urged the people to avoid being influenced by the ideology of extremism and terrorism, such as the Islamic State and IS militants, who, he said, had misinterpreted the concept of jihad in Islam.

He said Islam was a religion of peace and prosperity, and to uphold its sanctity, one must hold fast to the authentic Islam, the pure teachings of Islam in the true sense.

"I am grateful that the country continues to enjoy peace. In fact, based on the Global Peace Index 2017, Malaysia has managed to maintain its position as the third safest country in the Asian region and the 29th safest of the 163 nations in the world," he said.

On the economy, Najib said despite the global economic uncertainty, the country's economy grew at an extraordinary rate of 5.6 per cent in the first quarter of this year compared with the 4.5 per cent growth in the fourth quarter of last year.

In fact, he said, in March, for the first time in history, the value of Malaysia's exports reached RM80 billion, the highest monthly export achieved.

He said Malaysia had been



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak presenting his Hari Raya Aidilfitri message yesterday. PIC COURTESY OF PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

recognised by international firm BAV Consulting and Wharton School of the United States as the best country for investors this year.

On the matter of placing the people's interests first, Najib said the government had channelled assistance and initiatives, such as the IMalaysia People's Aid, people's housing projects, affordable homes, IMalaysia Clinics and IMalaysia People's Shops, to ease the cost of living of the people, especially those in the B40 and M40 groups.

He said in providing comfort and more integrated connectivity to the community, infrastructure projects such as the Mass Rapid Transit, Pan-Borneo High-

way, High-Speed Rail, Light Rail Transit extension and East Coast Rail Line, were being implemented vigorously.

On the matter of the future and TN50, Najib said looking forward, the contemporary world was on the verge of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

"At the same time, we must pray that we will be successful in buttressing a prosperous Malaysia in the ranks of the world's 20 most advanced countries. *Inshallah* (God willing)," he said.

Concluding his speech, Najib urged Malaysians to strengthen solidarity, set aside differences and enjoy the harmony under the IMalaysia bonds of brotherhood. **Bernama**

ANNOUNCEMENT

Hari Raya falls today

KUALA LUMPUR: Muslims in Malaysia will celebrate Aidilfitri today. This was announced over television last night by the Keeper of the Rulers' Seal, Datuk Seri Syed Danial Syed Ahmad.

"In keeping with the command

of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, following the consent of the rulers, I hereby declare that the date for Hari Raya Puasa for the states in Malaysia has been set for Sunday, June 25, 2017 (today)," he said. **Bernama**